

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5042

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CSCE, SHUM, SREF, OREP, RO

SUBJECT: CODEL EILBERG VISIT TO ROMANIAN, AUGUST 11-13, 1977

REF: A. STATE 177820; B. STATE 184552; C. BUCHAREST 6076;
D. BUCHAREST 6106

1. SUMMARY. CODEL EILBERG, CONSISTING OF FIVE CONGRESSMEN, WIVES AND STAFF, VISITED ROMANIA AUGUST 11-13 IN ORDER TO PURSUE DIVERSE BUT RUSHED PROGRAM OF CONSULTATIONS WITH EMBASSY AND ROMANIAN OFFICIALS, WITH PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO EMIGRATION AND CSCE QUESTIONS. WITH VISIT HIGHLIGHTED BY NEARLY TWO HOUR MEETING AT BLACK SEA WITH PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU, CODEL MEMBERS ALSO MET WITH MFA DEPFONMIN GLIGA, MINISTRY OF
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INTERIOR OFFICIALS RE INTERPOL AND PASSPORT ISSURANCE MATTERS, RADIO-TV AND MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS, AND CHIEF RABBI ROSEN. PROTOCOLARY MEETING WAS HELD AT GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. REP. EILBERG AND STAFF ALSO INTERVIEWED SEVERAL PROBLEM. CASES IN CONSULAR SECTION, INCLUDING DISSIDENT BAPTIST AND FAMILY OF ROMANIAN DIPLOMAT WHO DEFECTED TO U.S.

CODEL PRESENTED VARIED TOPICAL INTERESTS AND DIFFERED SUBSTANTIALLY AND PUBLICLY AT TIMES ON POLICY QUESTIONS, BUT ON THE WHOLE THEY APPEARED SATISFIED WITH EXPOSURE TO BOTH OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL SEGMENTS OF ROMANIAN SOCIETY. END SUMMARY.

2. DESPITE INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF CODEL'S POLICY INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES (REF A), GROUP ARRIVED IN ROMANIA AUGUST 11 FOR 48-HOUR WIRLWIND VISIT WITH ILL-DEFINED IDEA OF PRECISELY WHAT IT WANTED TO ACCOMPLISH AND WHOM IT WANTED TO MEET. PROGRAM WAS ARRANGED TO GIVE CODEL OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS WITH APPROPRIATE GOR OFFICIALS PRIORITY QUESTIONS OF HELSINKI IMPLEMENTATION, EMIGRATION FROM ROMANIA AND ITS NEXUS WITH MS. IMMIGRATION LAWS, ROMANIA'S MFN STATUS, AND PROPOSED DEPORTATION OF ALLEGED NAZI WAR CRIMINALS (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CASE OF BISHOP VUVLERIAN TRIFA). SPECIAL PROGRAM WAS ARRANGED, PER REQUEST REP. RUSSO (REF B), AT ROMANIAN RADIO-TV AND MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS (SEE SEPARATE MEMCON ON RADIO-TV MEETING).

3. MEETING WITH PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU: CODEL SPENT HALF OF ITS TWO DAYS IN ROMANIA ON BLACK SEA COAST, WHERE THEY WERE RECEIVED BY PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU FOR NEARLY TWO HOURS AT PRESIDENTIAL VILLA IN NEPTUN. IMPORTANCE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF FIRST CODEL VISIT SINCE PRESIDENT CARTER'S ELECTION WAS INDICATED BY ATTENDANCE AT MEETING BY RCP POLITICAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS ELENA CEAUSESCU, EMIL BOBU, LEONTE RAUTU AND BY CANDIDATE MEMBERS STEFAN ANDREI AND ION URSU. EXCHANGE OF VIEWS CENTERED ON U.S.-ROMANIAN BILATERAL RELATIONS AND GAVE SPECIAL ATTENTION TO ROMANIAN EMIGRATION AND FAMILY REUNIFICATION POLICIES. CEAUSESCU, WHO WAS ONLY SPEAKER FOR ROMANIAN SIDE. EMPHASIZED THAT

WHILE ROMANIA DOES NOT ENCOURAGE EMIGRATION DUE TO ITS POSITION AS AN ECONOMICALLY DEVELOPING COUNTRY IN NEED OF SKILLED LABOR, IT IS PREPARED TO GIVE ATTENTION TO "REAL REUNIFICATION OF RDAL FAMILIES", AND THESE WERE UNDERSTOOD TO BE NUCLEAR FAMILIES. HE FURTHER JUSTIFIED GOR POLICY TOWARD JEWISH EMIGRATION, WHEREBY HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF JEWS HAVE LEFT FOR ISRAEL WINCE WWII SO THAT ONLY 25,000 JEWS (ACCORDING TO 1977 CENSUS) REMAIN IN ROMANIA. AT ONE POINT BASED ON MISUNDERSTANDING OF WHAT EILBERG HAD SAID CEAUSESCU REMARKED THAT U.S. SHOULD STOP ENCOURAGING IMMIGRATION OF SKILLED WORKERS FROM DEVELOPING COUNTRIES LIKE ROMANIA, A STATEMENT THAT ELICITED REBUTTAL FROM THE CONGRESSMEN. TO CAP OFF MEETING, CEAUSESCU WAS

TREATED TO PUBLIC DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN EILBERG AND TWO
REPUBLICAN CONGRESSMEN (WIGGINS AND HYDE) CONCERNING
PRIORITY TO BE GIVEN TO EMIGRATION/IMMIGRATION AS DOMESTIC
OR INTERNATIONAL CIVIL RIGHT (SEE SEPARATE MEMCON FOR FULL
DISCUSSION OF MEETING).

4. JEWISH AND OTHER EMIGRATION PROBLEMS: REP. EILBERG
MET WITH ROMANIAN CHIEF RABBI MOSES ROSEN AND OTHER JEWISH
FEDERTION OFFICIALS AUGUST 11 IN WHAT PARTICIPANTS LATER
DESCRIBED VARIOUSLY AS "ANIMATED" OR "HEATED" EXCHANGE OF
VIEWS ON JEWISH EMIGRATION. IN 90-MINUTE MEETING AT MAIN
SYNAGOGUE, ROSEN GAVE ROSY BUT NOT INACCURATE PICTURE OF
CURRENT STATUS OF JEWISH COMMUNITY FACILITIES IN ROMANIA
AS WELL AS OF JEWISH EMIGRATION FROM ROMANIA SINCE WWII.
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ON JEWISH LIFE INROMANIA HE SAID THAT IF THE JEWS WOULD
ONLY AVAIL THEMSELVES OF THE POSSIBILITIES OFFERED
THEY COULD INDEED LEAD VERY FULL JEWISH LIVES. IF
THERE WAS ANY UNDERLYING THEME, IT SEEMED TO BE CONSCIOUS
REFUTATION OF STATEMENTS TO U.S. CONGRESS AND PRESS BY
RABBI ISRAEPL MILLER ON SIZE OF ROMANIAN JEWISH COMMUNITY
AND ON ITS EMIGRATION POSSIBILITIES. (ROSEN USES 40-43,000,
WHEREAS HE QUOTED RABBI MILLER AS USING 67,000. CURIOUSLY
ENOUGH DEPFONMIN GLIGA USED 35,000.) AT RABBI ROSEN'S

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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
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REQUEST A TAPE RECORDING WAS MADE OF CONVERSATION, A COPY OF WHICH WAS PROMISED TO EMBASSY FOR TRANSMISSION TO REP. EILBERG. VISITING EMBASSY CONSULAR SECTION THE NEXT DAY, REP. EILBERG INTERVIEWED THREE ROMANIANS-- THE FIRST AN EMBASSY LOCAL EXVLOYEE ONLY RECENTLY APPROVED FOR EMIGRATION, THE SECOND ONE OF ROMANIA'S MOST MILITANT DISSIDENT BAPTISTS (PAVEL NICOLESCU), AND THE THIRD A JEWISH WOMAN WHOSE ROMANIAN DIPLOMAT FATHER DEFECTED TO U.S. WHILE SERVING IN TEL AVIV. INTERVIEWS APPEARED TO SATISFY REP. EILBERG'S EXPRESSED WISH TO BE EXPOSED TO NON-OFFICIAL AS WELL AS OFFICIAL ROMANIANS, AND TO GAIN FIRST HAND A SENSE OF SOME ROMANIANS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEM WHICH THEY FACE AS ROMANIAN CITIZENS.

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5. MFA DISCUSSION: FOCUS OF NEARLY TWO-HOUR SESSION AT MFA AFTERNOON AUGUST 11 WAS DISCUSSION OF ROMANIAN AND U.S. VIEWS ON CSCE ISSUES BY DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER GLIGA AND REP. EILBERG, WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON FREE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE (EMIGRATION), FAMILY REUNIFICATION, AND OTHER BASKET III TOPICS. EILBERG THANKED GLIGA FOR THE CLOSE COOPERATION WHICH EXISTED BETWEEN OUR TWO DELEGATIONS AT BELGRADE PREPARATORY CONFERENCE, AND BOTH SIDES AGREED THAT THIS COOPERATION SHOULD BE CONTINUED AT THE MAIN FALL CONFERENCE. EILBERG CITED SEVERAL U.S. MFN CONCERNS, ESPECIALLY DECLINING JEWISH EMIGRATION AND ROMANIAN EXIT PROCEDURES, AND STATED THAT THE U.S. IS FOLLOWING THESE SUBJECTS CLOSELY. MFA CONSULAR DIRECTOR BADESCU PRESENTED FIGURES ON DEPARTURE FROM ROMANIA FOR ISRAEL AS FOLLOWS: CY1974 - 3,629; CY1975 - 2,464; AND CY1976 - 2,200. TO DATE IN CY1977, THERE HAVE BEEN 1,178 APPROVALS, NOT ALL OF WHOM WILL HAVE DEPARTED YET. REP. WIGGINS RAISED TOPIC OF FOREIGN MILITARY INTERVENTION IN OTHER COUNTRIES SUCH AS THE SOVIET UNION IN HUNGARY AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AND GLIGA OUTLINED GOR VIEWS ON MILITARY DISENGAGEMENT AND DISARMAMENT. AT REP. ZEFERETTI'S REQUEST, GLIGA ALSO DISCUSSED ROMANIAN POSITIONS

ON SEVERAL LAW OF THE SEA QUESTIONS, PARTICULARLY EXPLOITATION OF DEEP SEABED. REP. EILBERG EXPLAINED THE U.S. INTEREST IN DEPARTING NAZI WAR CRIMINALS FROM THE U.S., CITED THE CASE PENDING AGAINST BISHOQ VALERIAN TRIFA (BUCHAREST 6106). GLIGA AVOIDED A DIRECT RESPONSE TO THIS REQUEST AS WELL AS REP. RUSSO'S QUESTION ON GOR'S POSITION IF TRIFA WERE TO BE DEPARTED FROM U.S. BUT DID SAY HE WOULD RECOMMEND ROMANIAN COOPERATION.

6. GNA MEETING: MEETING ZHTH GNA PRESIDENT NICOLAE GIOSAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND OTHER OFFICIALS MORNING AUGUST 12 WAS STRICTPX CEREMONIAL AND NO ITEMS OF SUBSTANCE WERE RAISED. REP. EILBERG DID NOTE UTILITY OF VISIT TO U.S. BY SMALL GROUPS OF GNA DEPUTIES WITH SPECIFIC PROBLEM ORIENTATION. PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU LATER SUGGESTED DURING HIS MEETING WITH CODEL THAT HUMAN RIGHTS WAS SUITABLE TOPIC FOR INTER-PARLIAMENTARY DISCUSSIONS.

7. INTERIOR MINISTRY: CODEL HAD ORIGINALLY REQUESTED MEETING WITH GOR OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR INTERPOL MATTERS, AND MEETING ON THIS SUBJECT WAS SCHEDULED AT MINISTRY OF INTERIOR. WHEN REP. EILBERG LAST EXPRESSED

INTEREST IN MEETING WITH PASSPORT-ISSUING OFFICIALS, MINISTRY MEETING TOOK ON DUAL CHARACTER. IN RATHER UNIQUE INVITATION FOR INTERIOR MINISTRY, OFFICIALS WELCOMED CODEL VISIT AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT CLOSER CONTACT BETWEEN MINISTRY AND EMBASSY MIGHT BE POSSIBLE IN FUTURE, BUT OFFICIALS WERE NOT PREPARED TO DISCUSS DETAILED PASSPORT PROCEDURES. THEY ALSO INDICATED DOUBTS AS TO WHETHER BISHOP TRIFA WOULD BE ACCEPTED IF DEPORTED FROM THE U.S.

8. SUMMARY. CODEL VISIT MAY NOT HAVE BROKEN ANY NEW GROUND IN BILATERAL RELATIONS, BUT IT SERVED TO INTRODUCE ROMANIANS TO CURRENT CONGRESSIONAL THINKING ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND OTHER QUESTIONS WHICH PRESIDENT CARTER'S ADMINISTRATION HAS BROUGHT TO THE FORE. AS FOR THE CONGRESSMEN, TWO-DAY VISIT HOPE FULLY PROVIDED THEM WITH SOME INSIGHTS INTO ROMANIA'S OWN COMPLEX AND AMBIGUOUS INTERNAL SCENE. WE THEREFORE JUDGE IT TO HAVE BEEN DEFINITELY USEFUL. BARNES

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